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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: DAVUTOGLU TAKES THE CASE FOR TURKEY'S EU ACCESSION
TO BRUSSELS

Classified By: Classified by DCM Doug Silliman; Reasons: 1.4 (b), (d)

¶1. (SBU) Summary: EU embassy interlocutors here interpreted Davutoglu's October 1 Brussels statement urging the EU to admit Turkey by 2015 not as an ultimatum, but as a reaffirmation of the GoT's commitment to its EU candidacy. Progress on internal reforms and GoT actions that encourage hopes for a Cyprus settlement remain the most compelling arguments Turkey can muster on behalf of its EU aspirations. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) During his October 2 speech to the European Policy Center in Brussels, FM Davutoglu argued strongly that Turkey's EU accession would be a win/win for his own country and the EU. He contended Turkey would provide a strategic connection between the EU and the rest of Eurasia that would allow Europe to become a truly global power. In what may have been perceived as an excessively emotional response to a question, Davutoglu said the EU should not risk postponing its own global destiny by delaying Turkey's accession, but should admit Turkey by 2015, if not earlier.

¶3. (C) The Swedish Embassy's Turkey-accession lead welcomed Davutoglu's 2015 statement, saying it reaffirmed the GoT's commitment to the accession process. Similarly, the German Embassy POLCOUNS interpreted the statement as evidence the GoT really wants EU membership. Faruk Kaymakci, assistant to State Minister for EU Affairs Egemen Bagis, said the 2015 date was not intended as a deadline. He asserted it is the GoT's calculation of the earliest practical date by which Turkey could accede to EU. He said the GoT believes Lisbon Treaty uncertainties and the EU's internal seven-year financial planning cycle, the current term of which runs to 2014, preclude an earlier accession date.

¶4. (C) The German POLCOUNS was unperturbed by Davutoglu's reiteration of Turkey's unwillingness to open its ports and airports to Greek Cypriot ships and aircraft in accordance with the Ankara Additional Protocol: "It was nothing new." Kaymakci readily repeated Turkey's argument that its obligation to receive Greek Cypriot aircraft and vessels is contingent upon the EU's execution of its 2004 post-Annan Plan undertaking to relieve the isolation of northern Cyprus' Turkish Cypriots.

¶5. (C) Comment: Davutoglu's Brussels speech does not seem to have done any harm to Turkey's accession prospects among EU diplomats here, but neither did it advance Turkey's candidacy. We will continue to advise the GOT that its progress on internal reforms and its encouragement of hopes for a Cyprus settlement are the most compelling arguments it can muster on behalf of its EU aspirations.

JEFFREY

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